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Subject: Earthly Immortality.

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A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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EARTHLY IMMORTALITY.

"And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh."—HEB. XI. 4.

Very little is known of Abel, of whom this is spoken, except that he represented before God the spiritual element, while his brother represented the carnal and the secular. He must have been a man whose moral nature was impressive, mild, gentle. Yet he produced an effect, not only upon his own time, but upon after times. Being dead, he continued to live and speak as though he were present.

This living after a man is gone, may almost be said to be a universal aspiration. Almost all men, when they rise out of the savage state, begin to come under the influence of this ambition.

We are not content, either, with our individual sphere. We desire to be known and felt outside of ourselves, outside of our household, outside of our neighborhood. And our satisfaction grows if we find that our life affects the life of larger communities, and goes out through the nation and through the world. And it is but an extension of the same feeling that leads men to rejoice in the prospect of their being felt, known, spoken of, in after times, and of their influence being experienced even as in their own day.

To a highly poetic nature, it seems as though it were a kind of earthly immortality. One looks forward to it as if he already realized that he should still be alive, and enjoy all that should take place through him, after him, if it might be that he when dead should yet speak. And there are aspects in which this is honorable.

As you go toward animal life, you come to a narrower and narrower sphere, and to an unconsciousness, and to a want of aspiration. The ox, for instance, never seems to desire to be more than an ox. And as you go down, insect life has that kind of base content. It wants to be nothing better and nothing more. But as you rise even among the higher forms of animals, you begin to see the rudiments, as in the dog and in the horse, of a kind of feeling which afterwards, in a man, becomes aspiration. Though we can scarcely say that it is in the brute, yet the sense of ambition, the sense of praise, we seem to

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discern in higher kinds of animals. And in men this element begins where it leaves off in the highest part of the animal kingdom. Then it goes on and purifies itself from lower forms of development, and takes on higher elements, and becomes, finally, one of the noblest inspirations and sentiments of human life. A man who is content to live simply in himself, and for himself, and just through his allotted years, must be considered to be as vulgar as the clod which he treads upon.

The revelation of a future and a more glorious life meets one part of this desire which we have for the extension of our being. We are to live afterwards. Over the bright bridge of Christ's words we walk, now sure that we shall not plunge into a gulf of darkness and forgetfulness at death, but that we shall live again, and live forever.

One naturally clings to the places, the objects, the persons or the race among which he has expended himself. It is not an unnatural thing, nor a thing to be despised, when one lingers where his life has been developed upon earth, with fond longings, and that he distinctly experiences a wish to be felt and known there long after his natural life has ceased. One cannot well bear to think that among his companions, as soon as the services at his funeral are done, he shall be done, and that his name shall not be mentioned again by them. The father and the mother could not well bear to think of dying from the midst of their children, and have those children think nothing of them and care nothing for them. One wants to be felt after he is gone who has been felt during his life.

There is, however, a great difference in men's ambitions for such prolonged life. There is a great difference in the moral values of this longing for extended being and influence. If it be the ambition of vanity; if men desire, while alive, to be felt, in order that they may be praised; if their thought of other persons is simply how to draw from them revenue for themselves, or how they can make themselves idols, and make men believe that they are gods—if it be this, then it is a base and perverted form of that which is a very good thing in its nobler and higher form. And such men are very poor indeed, and contemptible, after death. It is as much as men can do to flatter those who make it their interest to flatter them, while they are alive. After they are gone, men kick over their idols. The world has too much to do to think about fools; and therefore men who spend their lives in imposing themselves on their fellow men, without any real worth, in flattering shams; who live so as to augment themselves by constantly appealing to the self-interests of their fellows—such men, when they die, die thoroughly, die all through, and are forgotten. The world has enough to do to carry on its business, and it cannot carry old rubbish along with it.

This desire to be remembered and loved and felt, is the natural inflection of domestic feeling; and in this sphere it is worthy of more consideration. One may fitly desire to be remembered by those who love him, and whose life has cheered his life. One may very properly desire to be felt long after he is gone, among those to whom he has given his thought, and his experience, and his time, and his property, to make them wiser and better. Love acts at short distances. It is the strongest but the shortest of all levers. Benevolence, though it acts more feebly at near approaches, acts longest. And though the love which we have to our families and to our intimate personal friends is more intense than our general benevolent desire to serve them after they are gone, it is that which we have done for their good—that is, it is our benevolent work and manifestation for them—that will continue to make us precious to them in their memory. We do not so much remember the caress as we do the benefit. We do not so much remember the authority, or the power, or the intensity, as we do that transforming influence which has made us better as well as happier.

The desire to be felt as an *influence* is the only true and noble ambition for this world. It is the desire of genius and enterprise, and it may develop itself in every phase of life—in things physical, social, intellectual, and moral. And its worth is in that order.

Dismissing, then, the vain ambition of distinction, let us consider the power which a man has of prolonging his good influence, and the various channels through which he can do it.

Selfishness, by its own law, not only moves in simple circles, but is short-lived. What men do for themselves is soon expended, and is soon forgotten. Even the monuments which men ostentatiously build for themselves, refuse long to carry their names, and often subject them to contempt, rather than to praise or to memory. Only that part of a man's life which includes other men's good, and especially the public good, is likely to be felt long after he himself is dead.

The physical industries of this world have two relations in them—one to the actor and one to the public. Honest business is more really a contribution to the public than it is to the manager of the business himself. Although it seems to the man, and generally to the community, that the active business man is a self-seeker, and although his motive may be self-aggrandizement, yet, in point of fact, no man ever manages a legitimate business in this life, that he is not doing a thousand fold more for other men than he is trying to do even for himself. For, in the economy of God's providence, every right and well-organized business is a beneficence and not a selfishness. And not less is it so because the merchant, the mechanic, the publisher, the artist, think merely of their own profit. They are in fact working more for others than they are for themselves.

When one so far recognizes this as to walk in a large and generous spirit in the administration of his thousand industries, he in fact is organizing economies which are to go on working long after he has died. That which his business accomplishes, that which his energy has set on foot, will goon working. And the thought—that is, the brain-power—which he has put into his business, does not die when the brain that originated that thought dies. It incarnates itself in the affairs of human life; and the man sends down much of his personality, shrewdness, frugality, economy, wisdom of combination, and fruitfulness of result, in the business which he has established and organized and carried wisely forward.

Who built that mill which clatters night and day under the willows in the valley-road just outside of the village, where on moonlight nights the maid and the youth whisper, and where through the Saturday afternoons the children frolic and play, and where artists go to sketch the scene? Who built that old mill which has ground the bread of two generations? Men do not know. His name may be on some mouldering stone in the graveyard. But it is the man who built it that is working in it still. It was his skill and engineering industry that put it up. And though the hands that made it shall make nothing more, since they have mouldered in the dust, yet the mill which they built has been working for the men of that village ever since its erection.

You may say that building it was a job. Yes, it was a job. You may say that the man who built it got his pay. Yes, he got his pay. You may say that he has had a *quid pro quo*, and has nothing more to do with it. I beg your pardon; no man sets on foot anything that goes on perpetually working for the welfare of the community, that he has not a right in his generous nature to feel that he is identified with them as long as he lives. And whoever builds a good factory or a good shop, whoever puts in motion a clattering town-mill in the midst of a community, is not done with it when he leaves it to do his work. Although he is not an intellectual laborer, although his is not by any means the highest range of activity, although he is a worker in the humbler ranks of life, yet he is working after he is dead in the things in which he has helped society. For although he helped himself a little, he helped society ten thousand times more. And I pity business men who do not recognize the fact that the largest side of their secular business is benevolence. I marvel that men do not sympathize with that side more than they do.

The builders of stores, and warehouses, and shops, and dwellings, are not building them for wages merely. They build them upon contract, to be sure; but their interest in them does not expire with the

fulfillment of that contract. It is not how much these things have done for them that limits their interest in them, but how much they were able, through these things, to make the brain work in the future, and so to incorporate their usefulness into the lower ranges and economies of human life.

Ah! how wisely might men walk through the streets and say, "I have no eloquence and no poetry; I have been obliged to be a humble worker, I am becoming old; these hands refuse the plane and the saw, and this head the planning and the architectural supervision; but I have not lived in vain. There are in this town five hundred houses where scores and scores of virtuous and happy families dwell; and it was my faithfulness that threw those roofs over their heads, and built those walls, and stored those houses with conveniences. I am not known; my name is not whispered; the owners thank nobody but themselves; yet I know that I built those houses, and I know that they will rear virtuous families. I know that as my work has begun, so it will go on, in the blessed service of fostering the institution of the household down through many generations."

And those men who put on shameful roofs, and built tumble-down walls, and covered up bad work with putty and paint, ought to follow these faithful workers, and say, "I have been a tormenter of life; I have cheated all the way through; I have built houses that will go on from generation to generation vexing and harrassing those who occupy them."

And then the contractor ought to condemn himself, who, from extravagance, or for the sake of making a little profit, crowded these builders of poor houses into such a corner that they had to be dishonest and cheat.

But any man who has helped to beautify the city; any man who has helped to make the warehouses noble, the wharves and piers serviceable, and the dwellings enduring and comfortable, has reason to look back with satisfaction on what he has done. He has not written a book; his usefulness is of a lower form: but it is a form in which he may well take pleasure. Any man who has spent an honest life in rearing up the physical economy of society, by which he is to promote the happiness of households, and the industries and frugalities, and so the welfare, of his fellow men, has lived to a good purpose. For the man who is a carpenter, or builder, or architect, or engineer, does not work merely for present remuneration. He puts that in his work which will remunerate him. And I think many a man has looked back from heaven and thanked God that he had a chance to bless mankind by building good houses. And some men have, perhaps, looked back, not from heaven, with remorse, that they built houses that were a curse to mankind.

He whose enterprise develops new sources of wealth in the community; he who gives to the community mines or manufacturing products; he who starts occupations for supplying men's necessities not before known, becomes a lasting benefactor; and he has a right in his own spirit to thank God for permitting him to be a benefactor through these material instruments.

So, not alone are those men benefactors who are warriors, and statesmen, and scholars, and poets. These other men, too, in a humbler way, but really, ought to have a share of our thought and credit. They who promote industry, and make it more prolific of profit, are benefactors.

So inventors, preëminently, are benefactors, if they but knew it, and would take a benevolent view of their occupations. They are benefactors who by machinery abbreviate labor, and bring years into days, making hours do what months were required to do, and who not only augment the comfort of men, rendering cheap goods accessible to the poor and needy, but who add to men's power. A tool is but the extension of a man's hand; and a machine is but a complex tool. And he that invents a machine augments the power of a man. And men are as much mightier to-day than they were five hundred years ago, as all the machines of the world make them to be. For the machinery of the globe, after all, is but the manhood of the globe, and represents human power as it has been organized. And he who increases this power by inventing a machine or tool, although he walks frequently unrecognized except as a mere commercialist, although he is called a mechanic, yet, if he be wise, he is a benefactor, and has a right to think so.

Take the sewing-machine. There is many and many a man who has died leaving millions and millions of money, but who has not conferred upon society one tithe of the blessing which has been conferred upon it by Howe. And there will come a day when such men as Watt, and Fulton, and Jacquard, and Stephenson and Ericsson (not born among us, but gladly ours) will be regarded as benefactors. These men will have around about their names more glory than that which mere money could purchase. They will be recognized as having wrought for society; as having used their inventive genius so as to make men stronger, and society more capable, and the ages fuller of profit. These men extended themselves; and being dead, they live. Fulton lives in every boat that by night or by day goes up the North River; in every boat that ploughs the Sound or crosses the sea; in all the steamers that go hither and thither on oceans and lakes and rivers, carrying the commerce of continents. These men who have filled the world with abbreviated industries, and multiplied the wealth and

resources of civilization for the welfare of mankind, are mighty men. Being dead, they speak, in every clattering loom or in every crank that is plied by the machinery which they invented. Where iron is, where wood is, and where all fabrics are—there are they at work.

The old mythologies of Vulcan are outdone, and we have men that are more nearly gods than ever was the vulgar Vulcan.

The man who builds a road through the wilderness, is an unknown benefactor. He is "somebody;" and it is a pity that the name of that somebody was not put where it should be known. It would be a glorious thing to see on a man's tombstone the inscription, "An honest man, who built the road between such and such points." The man who builds a bridge over a stream so that it shall last for generations; the man who shall build the bridge across this great river* on our right hand, is not a worker for himself. He works for every little foot that goes safely over it. He works for every mother that hurries home to her darling children. He works for every poor man who is convenienced by it. Such men work for their own pittance of wages, and they work for the time in which they live; but dying, they shall go on speaking for the benefit of their fellow men.

Oh! that men might know how much benefit there is in mechanical occupations, and in benevolent art! Oh! that men might take comfort in knowing that when they are dead they shall yet speak!

Experience shows that these advances in physical things are more beneficently felt by the poor than by others. They are felt by the rich; but everything that contributes to the convenience and prosperity of the community, and so raises it in the scale, is, first or last, a greater benefit to the poor than to any others.

It is not the selfish or personal element that prolongs one's life. A man that is dead is not to be remembered simply because he invented something. He is to be remembered because that which he invented goes on working benefit after he is dead. And as long as it is doing good to men, so long he is to be remembered. It is that which we do for the public good that makes our physical industries virtuous and beneficent.

Next, men who organize their money into public uses, live as long as the benefaction itself serves the public.

Can you tell me who were the rich men in the time of Queen Elizabeth? Cannot? They puffed themselves up, and walked down the streets, rotund and vain, and were as gods; and there was not a lackey in all London that could not have told you who they were. What has become of those rich men? They are dead and forgotten. But cannot gold embalm a man? Oh no, it cannot do any such thing.

* The East River.

Men can be embalmed; but the trouble is that then they are mummies, and nobody knows or cares who they were. They are good for something. We can use them to boil our teakettle with. The gum and the myrrh and the what not that are used to preserve a mummy, are good to boil our modern teakettle with. But we do not care for those defunct creatures who have gone and left nothing but themselves.

Can you tell me who were the rich men a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago in New York? What! not any of them? Yes, there were Watson, Lee, and some other names, that I might call, if I had time to search for them. There were a few rich men whose names have come down to us, written on the institutions that they founded. But what about all the rest? What has become of those men that owned the most ships in Boston, in New York, and in Philadelphia? They are gone; and they make just as good dust as poor men do. Their names are like the bubbles which children blow of soapsuds from pipes in summer. All are gone except the men who knew how to organize their wealth into public uses. You shall find here and there a business man, a great saver, a man that had the genius of making and keeping money, and that became over-swollen in wealth, who luckily said, "I will give some millions of this money to the orphans." And so Girard slipped through into immortality, and will be remembered because he took money out of his own pocket and put it into the public veins. He that works for God's great scheme of benevolence shall not be forgotten, and Girard has hitched himself to the work of benefitting mankind, and he cannot be disconnected from it. As long as time shall endure his is a name that men will be interested in. And yet, it was only that lucky final stroke of beneficence that saved him. Had it not been for that, he would now have been ocean-deep in forgetfulness. There have lived multitudes of men that were nearly as rich as he was, but are forgotten. There are multitudes of enormously rich nothings living now in New York, who soon will be pricked by death; and then in a moment they will be gone. When the proper tears have been shed, and the proper services have been hurried over, and the proper pulling and hauling has been gone through with, and the moneys have been distributed, nobody will care for them. What does a thirsty man care for the cloud that brought the water which he drinks? He has got what he wants, and the cloud is gone, and is forgotten. And heirs forget the man by whom money is handed down to them; or they only remember him to curse him for living so long, and worrying out their patience as they did. A man that is a mere muck-rake has nothing in him that men want to remember. I like a fire; but I never thought of praising the coalscuttle in which the

coal was brought to make it. Men like money; but they do not care for those who scrape it together.

If, however, a man organizes his money so that when he is gone that money keeps at work for the best side of human nature, and for the best side of human society, then that man, being dead, though he was rich, yet speaketh.

There is many a man who, having money, says to his right hand, to which the Lord denied the sculptor's art, "Thou shalt carve a statue;" and he takes some poor unfriended artist from the village, and endows him, and sends him to Rome, and brings him back, and puts him into life. Powers and Jackson carve beauteous figures to last for generations; and it is the rich man who patronized them who is working through the men that he fashioned and formed.

There is many a man who says, "Oh tongue! thou art dumb; but thou shalt have tongues that shall speak." And he searches out from among the poor those that are ambitious to learn, and that are likely to become scholars, and puts them forward, and sees that they are educated. And thereafter this worthy minister, this true statesman, that wise and upright lawyer, and this unimpeachable judge, become, as it were, an extension of his own self. There is no way in which a man can use a little capital to a better advantage than in the education of young men and young women. When a man fashions a good schoolmistress or a good nurse; when a man prepares one to be a good almoner and helper of the poor; when a man takes one who is endowed with signal gifts, and gives him a chance to act in life, they, as it were, take something of his individuality. On their way down through life and to immortality they carry him with them. And so the man who would have died if he had only been rich, lives in other men, and has an immortality which distributes itself through the race.

A man has the gift of wealth-amassing; and he says to himself, "Selfish gains will die with me, and be buried with me so far as I am concerned." And he thinks of the village where as a boy he played, and remembers its barrenness from want of taste and from poverty, and says, "I will go back there, and that village shall be made beautiful." And not only does he build there, within moderation, and with taste and beauty, a dwelling; but his house becomes the measure and the mark of all the houses in the neighborhood. It is his fence that set all the people in the village putting their fences right. Before, they did not care how their fences looked; but since this comely fence has been built and kept in good taste, the children every time they come home, say to the old curmudgeon, their father, "How our fence does look!" And they worry him; and the wife teases him; and by and by they get him to put up a pretty fence. And more generous ideas in regard

to houses and grounds are instilled into the minds of the young. And the young men and maidens, when they get married, and settle down in life, exercise better taste in fitting up their homes. Their houses, though small and plain, are more tastefully planned; and there are more trees about their grounds, and more flowers in their gardens. There springs up on every side an imitation of that rich man's example. And in the course of twenty or twenty-five years he will have regenerated the taste of the community.

Or, he goes beyond that. He inspires in all the neighborhood a disposition for beauty by planting trees along the highway. He says, "There lies between me and the next village a long stretch where the wind blows remorselessly in winter, and where the sun pours down its heat on the weary, over-spent traveler in summer; I will line those five miles of road with generous elms, and will pay the expense." And he lives to see the time when, reaching across the road, these elms meet at the top. And he rides many times through the long, green colonade which he himself has made. And when he shall have been dead a hundred years, he will be remembered as the man who made that long walk of beauty.

Oh! that I could remember and write the names of the men that planted the old elms in Hadley, and Hatfield, and Springfield, in Massachusetts, and in all the Connecticut river towns, where so much beauty was so cheaply purchashed for generations and generations! I am amazed to see how men live—men that have power to open the cornucopia, as it were, and pour down abundance on the times to come, at almost no expense, and that yet live twenty or thirty years in a town, and leave it at the end of that time as ragged and squalid as it was at first.

I rode from Warwick to Killingworth Castle—a long distance—under columnar trees; and I looked up and blessed God for those ancestors who planted this magnificent drive. And I have wished that all men, not only in New England, but in America, might know what beauty, what refreshment, what refinement and gladness there is in this most simple method of decorating one's village and one's neighborhood, or the roads from village to village. For they who bless their fellow men by such benefactions, become almoners of taste and distributors of comfort. And *being dead they yet speak.* It may be that they do not speak their own names; but they speak happiness and satisfaction. And there is not a man so poor that he cannot set out a tree.

There are young men here who never heard such things put into a sermon before; but you will never forget that you heard them to-day. There are young men here who are going to be rich; and let me tell

you—and you will never forget this—that you must not be rich for yourselves alone, but that you must organize your riches so as to make other folks happy if you want to be remembered. Do this, and as long as the world stands you will never be forgotten. And if you want to know what to do, let me tell you to commence doing something to-morrow. A man that is going to do good with his money when he shall have got a great deal of it, makes a bargain with the devil; and the devil outwits him. Where men are going to use their money so that it will do good when they get through with it, the Lord is apt to get through with them before they think of being through with their money. If you want to be benevolent by and by, be benevolent now. Form the habit of being benevolent by giving at least a little of your means for benevolent purposes as you go along. It is not a bad rule to lay down, for every man to say to himself, "I will spend for other people one-tenth of the clear income that I receive." It is not a mere professional saying. I tell you, if you give away a portion of the profits of your business for the benefit of others, it will sanctify the rest. It will bring a moral element into your life. Say to yourself, "I will give one-tenth part of my receipts, whether those receipts are large or small; and it shall go for the good of others, and not of myself." Wherever you are, and whatever circumstances you are in, do something that shall go on benefitting men after you are dead, if it is only to plant a tree or a bush to beautify a house or enhance the comfort of travelers. Do not be contented with simply helping your own self.

How much more is this true of those who lay out parks for the masses, and provide such magnificent breathing places for our cities! I cannot enough express my gratitude for the men who laid out what will be the two most splendid parks, I think, that will exist on earth, when they are completed, and when they shall have grown to their full proportions—the Central Park in New York, and the Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Mr. Olmsted might very well rest with this epitaph: "He was the Superintendent of the two great parks." For it is not simply what they are that is to measure his usefulness, but what they will do in leading to the laying out of other parks in cities that are ambitious of distinction. No Boston, no Philadelphia, no Cincinnati, no Chicago, no city of importance, can afford to have a park less excellent than those of New York and Brooklyn. And blessed are the men who have labored to put forward these great benefactions of the public, which hold up to the eyes of the poor and needy so much beauty, and bring them into such sweet commerce with God in nature, and give them such resting places and such bounties for their leisure days. And cursed be they whose base selfishness hinders the plentitude of this bounty.

Not only may wealth be organized into institutions of secular pleasure and comfort and beauty, but it may be organized still more potently into institutions of mercy—into houses of refuge; into retreats for the unfortunate; into hospitals for the sick; into orphan asylums; into houses of industry and of employment. These forms of mercy, these eleëmosynary organizations, follow society. As the Commissions followed the army, and picked up the wounded and the dying and the overspent, and ministered to them, so these great public charities follow in the wake of human life, and pick up those that are weak and wounded and perishing. And their mercy can scarcely be estimated. There ought to be, not fewer, but more of them. They do not attain to the first rank; but attempting to bind up the wounds that are made, is second only to preventing the making of wounds. No man in his life-time, and no man in his individual experience, can feel or do what he can organize his money to feel or do. If you had countless wealth, and all the poor in Brooklyn should make procession by your house, and you should give them bountifully of your store, you could not do by your alms anything like the good that you would if you should build a hospital or some other charitable institution which would go on benefitting the poor long after you were dead. You will die in a score of years, perhaps; but not a score of centuries need slay the institution which you have reared. Your personal sympathy will reach but a little way; but here is the sympathy of this organized wealth which will go on dealing with generations, and generations, and generations; and it will be just as fresh a thousand years hence, unwearied and unspent, as it was the hour when it was established.

Oh! what a benefaction for any man that has money, and has faith to see how it can work after he is gone, and a heart to set it to work! Being dead, he speaks, and speaks chorally.

But even more important are those institutions which go before society, march ahead, as it were, and, by distributing intelligence and promoting virtue, prevent suffering. The institution which prevents crime and vice and suffering, is more beneficent than that which attempts to remedy them after they have happened. Therefore all those institutions which stimulate and develop important truths for the world cannot be over-estimated. There are a great many of them. In this class are the premiums, endowments, prizes. Take, for instance, that single foundation, the Bampton Lectures. A New England man, dying, left a fund the income of which every year was to be devoted to paying for a course of lectures which were to vindicate the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the divinity of our Lord, and the evangelical religion. From that fund there has sprung a line of lectures that constitutes one of the most noble monuments of learning and piety

that has been known in any language on the globe. Could money be made to work such important results in any other way? A man that shall endow a prize in any line of science, in any line of invention, in any line of the vindication of truths, puts his money where it will work as a perpetual lever and stimulus; and no man can estimate the power and the value of it.

Then there are those institutions which diffuse knowledge, such as libraries and reading-rooms. And yet, brethren, I think these are in their infancy. We have but the germ of what I hope will ere long exist. We must have these institutions removed from places of dissipation and temptation, and must endow them amply, and must take the stiffness from them, so that they shall be homes useable and familiar. Look at the Free Reading Room of the city of Boston. I mention it because it is connected with one of the noblest libraries in one of the most magnificent buildings in any city, and because it is sumptuously provided, and is open freely to every man, no matter how poor, who chooses to avail himself of its privileges, either of reading books there, or taking them to his house to read. It is a free-will offering, and is welcome to the poorest of the poor, clear down to the bottom of society, as well as to the rich.

Now, when Christianity makes a gift to the poor, it cannot afford to pick off the meanest products of the tree, and say to them, "You are poor, and you can eat this worm-eaten fruit." When Christianity gives to the poor, it is bound to give them the best it has. Therefore, when you build missions for the poor, build them better than your own churches. When you open reading-rooms for the poor, make them more sumptuous than the reading-rooms which you open for yourselves and your children. Be more generous to the poor than you are to yourselves. That is the spirit of Christianity. Be more kind to them than you are to yourselves. That is the true inspiration of Christianity. And when men shall understand this, and begin to endow missions and reading-rooms for the poor—magnificently endow them, so that they will go on working hundreds and hundreds of years—they can afford to rest from their labor and go to heaven; for being dead they shall speak in the things they have done, and carry comfort and encouragement and relaxation and knowledge to those who most need them. A man might well place before him in life this single ambition, "I will make myself so well off that I shall have enough to build a kind of home for the poor, so that when my family shall be scattered, there shall be gathered a larger family whom I have blessed." Oh! how poor the vision of a life of pleasure seems in comparison and contrast with these munificent and noble ways of life!

So, men that establish academies, and colleges, and universities live

forever, and live, too, in a way that an angel might be proud to live. They that established Harvard—who, even with heavenly arithmetic, can compute what their money has done since they have gone home? Is not the name of Yale familiar to every intelligent man on the continent because he endowed the College at New Haven? And men will yet carry down to thousands of years hence that great name. And Cornell's name is rescued already, as, also, is Vassar's, and Drew's, and Astor's, that would not have sounded far down in the future if they had not had an inspiration which taught them to found seminaries for the discovery and propagation of knowledge among the masses of men.

These endowments have in them immortality on earth. This is the reason why I say that men ought not to be poor if they can be rich. There is a power in wealth, when it is guarded by benevolence, which no man has a right to despise. Having such a sword as that with which to slay ignorance, no man ought to refuse to draw it from its sheath. Gain wealth, and then endow institutions. That is the way to use wealth to a good purpose.

We may rise to a higher grade, and to a more familiar ground therefore, since it is more frequently inculcated in the pulpit. As virtue and spirituality are higher than physical qualities; as the wealth of society lies more in the goodness of Christian institutions and Christian men than in ease, or abundance, or pleasure; so he most wisely prolongs his life to after-days who so lives as to give form and perpetuity to spiritual influences. Whoever makes the simple virtues more honorable and attractive among men, prolongs his own life.

The evil of untruth I need not expound to you. He who makes truth beautiful to men in his day; he who makes men want to be true, and seek after truth, and believe in it, becomes a benefactor. So that I think one single character in Walter Scott's novels is worth more than all the characters put together of many more fashionable novels. For, after all is said and done, if all the novels of the globe were burned but that, I think we should have enough yet. There is Jeanie Deans, who, standing in court, had it in her power, apparently, to clear her sister of disgrace and death by simple vacillation; by simple prevarication; by giving up the truth; and not even the love of her father, who seemed about to die before her eyes, nor the love of the sister of her bosom, could make her swerve. She must tell the truth, though it slew her and every other one. And I think there is more heroic power in that simple character in "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," than in many a moral treatise, and many a system of moral philosophy. She, to the end of the world, will make telling the truth seem more noble and heroic, and so will make men nobler and more heroic. He who stands in the midst of dangers with every temptation to be a coward, but who is so

true that calmly he sacrifices his life to fidelity, makes the simple virtue of fidelity so beautiful and heroic that he lives still in the vitality which he has given to that moral element.

I would that the heroic deeds of noble black men were recorded. How many dusky faces went down in our war without a name! When, in the extreme South, a boat containing a party of our men, had stuck on the shoals, and they were obliged to lie down to escape the showers of balls that were flying in every direction, a stout black man said, "Somebody must be hit to get dis yer boat out of danger," and sprung overboard, and put his shoulder to the gunnel, and shoved her off; and and while the party escaped, he, pierced, fell into the stream, and died. He knew what he risked; but he said, in his soul, "Here are these my friends. They must all perish, or some one must take the risk. I take it." Such a name ought not to perish. Such an example ought not to be forgotten—and all the more because it is the example of a man in lowly circumstances. It lifts up the heroism of self-sacrifice, and makes it better worth one's while to be a man, and makes life more noble and more radiant, and corrects that unbelief in moral qualities which is the bane and curse of the world.

Whoever suffers for a truth, whoever endures heroically for a virtue, not only saves his own name, but gives a force and a perpituity to humble virtues that will open men's hearts to them, and will make their empire beautiful and potential.

All who have opened the divine nature to men; all who have developed to men higher moral truths, and made them like their daily bread; all who have lifted the life of the world up into a higher sphere —they, although dead, yet speak. They may not be spoken of; but, what is more to the point, they themselves speak, and speak the same language; and all the better, because when a man is dead the prejudices and the imperfections that lingered about him are dead, too. And then his voice becomes clearer, and his testimony is more widely received. Men will listen to the truth that dead men speak who would not listen to the same truth spoken by them when they were alive. Speak on, then. And if, in the midst of reproach and contumely, you are bearing witness to nobler truths, and the men that you live among will not hear you, take courage from the assurance that there will come a time when men will open their ears to you. And if you give your life to the generation in which you live, all the more powerful will be your testimony; and being dead you will preach and teach yet.

Lastly, those who have the gift of embodying moral truths and noble experiences (which are the best truths that ever dawn on the the world) in verse; those who have the power to give their higher thoughts and feelings the wings of poetry—they, being dead, speak

farback. We hear Homer chanting yet, and chanting the best things that men knew in his day. And the world is still willing to listen to the oldest poet. Going further down, in the majestic numbers of the Hebrew Testament we find the most sublime truths of God and of destiny in poetic forms; and the world is never weary of listening to them. They reappear in every form of translation. They are as fresh to-day as they were on the day they were uttered. And since that time, in every nation, bards have sprung up. And there have been singers for the devil as well as for God; the name of the wicked shall rot; and the fame of wicked men, that has for a little time had its bad currency, sinks more and more away, and becomes the slime and the sediment of the ever-rolling stream of life. But the voice of men who speak for love and purity and immortality, grows sweeter and clearer with time. And he who has had permission to write one genuine hymn, to send forth one noble sonnet, to sing one stately epic, may well fold his wings and his hands, and say, "Now let thy servant depart in peace."

What are you doing, my brother? What are you doing, my sister? Young man, what do you propose? Will you build pyramids of stone, or will you build pyramids of thought? Will you live to make yourself a little happier for a few years than otherwise you would have been; or, will you forget yourself, remembering the sublime meaning of the Master's words, *He that will save his life shall lose it?* He that seeks present ease, present power and present wealth, without regard to the welfare of men, shall lose everything that he strives for, and his own name shall be forgotten. *He that will lose his life for my sake shall find it.* He that puts his life into doing good; he that would purify men; he that would suffer for the sake of suffering men; he that puts the enginery of feeling and the power of business into the work of beneficence in this world, though he may be subject to obloquy, though he may be under a cloud, though he may lose himself, will be remembered when he is dead. The time will come when his name will shine out brighter than the morning star.

May God give you wisdom, not vainly to sit and wish that you might be known in after times, but to understand that he who makes his life an instrument for promoting the happiness of others, being dead, shall yet speak. He shall rise to immortality, and to the society of just men made perfect, and of God, the Judge of all. And there, through an endless life, he shall yet speak joy, and shout praise, and be as the angels of God forevermore.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We adore and bless thee, our Father. Far above us art thou. Thou art beyond our comprehension. Thy nature transcends all that we know, or can know, in goodness, in wisdom, and in power. Nor can we understand the conditions of thy being, since we cannot go beyond our own. But we rejoice that thou art more, so that when we see thee as thou art, face to face, we shall not be disappointed, but shall be satisfied. Filled with the utmost imagination of excellence, and beauty and majesty, thou art still more sublime than all our thought of thee, or than any thing that we can think. We rejoice that we shall find thee more full of graciousness, and more wonderful in love, and in that sphere of perfected life which shall work that which it is not given in the winter of this life to do. In all plentitude and power. it shall become then the law, and the fruit thereof shall be a blessedness which it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. We desire to walk by faith of that blessed land, and of that glorious and final vision of God. We desire to live as seeing him who is invisible. We desire to live though our senses do not help us. We desire to take the inspirations of our heart, the intuitions of our moral nature; and we desire by thee to be led far above ourselves, or above men, or above anything we can know of thee. And though by searching we can not find thee out unto perfection, we can find out enough for love, and joy, and trust, and hope, and gratitude.

And now, we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, pour thyself in upon thy children to-day. There are those here who know themselves to be thine. Their hearts cry out for God. Their spontaneous nature unuttered, is, Our Father. By this token they know of their adoption. And we beseech of thee that they may have the witness of the Spirit in them to-day, and that they may rejoice in this heirship. All things are theirs. Thou art theirs. And with thee they are heirs to an eternal inheritance. Thy providence, thy grace, thy wisdom, and thy goodness, surround them here. Thou dost guide them. Thou dost succor them in temptation. Thou dost comfort them in sorrow. Thou art tender and gracious to them in infirmities. And even their sins are not set down against them. Thou dost forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. And we thank thee that thus they are walled about by thy goodness. They are borne as in the Lord's chariot of love. And they shall finally be saved. For thou hast overcome death and Satan. And the power of darkness and the power of light shall not be able to prevail against thee and thine own.

And now, Lord, we pray that this may be a day of joy among thy people. May they confess their sins, knowing that thou art willing to forgive him that confesses thy mercies to him, and rejoice with thanksgiving and gratitude. We pray that their hearts may be ready to-day to call up from the past the memories of all thy mercies, long extended. How many hast thou spared in hours of critical danger! How many have seemed to themselves under the impending cloud whose bolt was about to descend upon their head! and thou didst cause the storm to pass by; and they were rescued, and did not fall down under the blasting stroke. How many have been sick, and have been rescued from the grave! How many little prayers and importunities are answered! How often has the goodness of God been vindicated in the exigencies of past experience! Who of us has not cause to recognize thy sovereign mercy? May thy people to-day, with humility and with thanksgiving, be grateful to thee, and pour out their hearts before thee. We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the families that are represented in this congregation. Help thy servants to minister in holy things in their households, to walk before their children blameless, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We pray that

thy kingdom may come, and thy will be done everywhere, in the households of our congregation.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt strengthen thy servants, and prepare them for thy will and for thy work. And we pray that thou wilt bless those who go forth to teach; and may they themselves be qualified by thy Spirit for blessed teaching.

Bless thy cause in every form, and in all places. Bless assemblies of thy people of every name. Wilt thou unite thy Churches more cordially in sympathy and in love. While men differ in things remote and outward, may they more and more be joined in inward experiences—in faith, and love, and holy hope, of the Gospel of Christ.

We pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. Bless our own nation. Purge it from iniquity. Deliver it from evil laws and evil rulers. Destroy selfishness. Prevent avarice from breaking over all bounds. Grant that thy kingdom may come in the hearts of this great people; that they may serve the Lord, and love their fellow men, and purify themselves from evil works, and be an acceptable people unto God. And may all the nations that in their weakness are struggling for their birthright be helped of thee. May darkness flee away; may superstition cease; may wisdom prevail; may liberty, and purity, and true Christian manliness everywhere abound; and may thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Which we ask for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless us with the light of the truth, and with the knowledge of thy word. And grant, we pray thee, that they may temper our desires, and restrain our selfish passions, and inspire our generous sentiments. Lead us to plan, in this life, not for ourselves, but through ourselves for others; so that we may have a larger life—a life which death cannot touch; which age cannot impair; on which weakness shall have no power; which clouds cannot conceal nor storms blight. So may we learn the great art of building that we shall build beyond the reach and touch of time; that we shall build for immortality. And then, where neither death nor weakness shall come any more, in thine own heavenly kingdom, may we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

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HOWARD & CO.,

785 Broadway, New York.

(Formerly of No. 619 Broadway.)

Merchant's Life Insurance Company,

OF NEW YORK.

Office 257 Broadway.

Organized under the Laws of the State of New York.

WILLIAM T. PHIPPS, President.

HENRY HILTON, *Counsel.* A. D. HOLLY, *Secretary.*

O. S. PAINE, M. D., *Medical Examiner.*

Issues all kinds of Life and Endowment Policies on the Mutual System, free from Restrictions on Travel and Occupation, which permit Residence anywhere without extra charge.

Life Insurance contributes effectually to make life itself longer, society happier, the aggregate prosperity of the community greater; and just so far as it shall extend, while still conducted on sound principles, it will multiply the kindly bonds that connect men, while encouraging economy, invigorating enterprise, justifying hope in each individual and shedding the light of a more serene happiness into many households.—*Rev. R. S. Storrs, Jr., D. D.*

Premiums may be paid annually, semi-annually, or quarterly, in cash.
All policies are non-forfeitable and participate in the profits of the Company.
Dividends are made annually on the contribution plan.

It is every man's duty to provide for his family. That provision must include its future contingent condition—that provision, in so far as its material, men ordinarily seek to secure by their own accumulation and investments. But all these are uncertain. The man that is rich to-day, by causes beyond his reach, is poor to-morrow. A war in China, a revolution in Europe, a rebellion in America, overrule ten thousand fortunes in every commercial community.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

No other Company presents a Policy more secure and liberal in its provisions, and so equitable in all its arrangements for the benefit of the insured.

The importance of Life Insurance to society everywhere: its strengthening influence upon the sinews of social life: the solidity it imparts to all domestic institutions: the protection it affords to the labors and the recreations of existence: the comfort it brings to the sacred fireside at home; the relief it pours out so abundantly upon the bereaved and suffering; the countless benefits it scatters along the pathway of life; the blessings it reserves for a future of sorrow—all these are now more truly perceived and more warmly appreciated than ever they were before. People are beginning to understand in earnest, that their best interests are conserved in these wise and benevolent institutions. Great confidence is reposed in them, in all directions. The hopes of parent and child, lover and sweet heart, husband and wife, brother and sister, old and young, the widow and orphaned—all are garnered up in their keeping.—*N. P. Willis.*

Policy-holders are Members of the Company, and entitled to vote for Directors according to the amount of Insurance.

A Policy of Life insurance is the cheapest and safest mode of making a certain provision for for one's family. It is a strange anomaly that men should be careful to insure their houses, their furniture, their ships, their merchandise, and yet neglect to insure their lives—surely the most important of all to their families and far more subject to loss.—*Benjamin Franklin.*

Pamphlets containing Rates of Premium, and information on the subject of Life Insurance may be obtained at the Office of the Company, or of any of its Agents.

Parties desiring to represent this Company in the capacity of Agents, will please address the New York Office.

Your affairs may become involved, and your property taken for debt. Your stocks and shares may fall in value. But a thousand dollars insured upon your life cannot be taken for debt; cannot be alienated from your heirs; and if you have chosen your Company discreetly it is subject to no commercial risks. It is as nearly sure as any thing earthly can be.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

Charter Perpetual.

It is time our people understood and practised more generally Life Insurance. Many a widow and orphan have had great reason to be grateful that the advantage of Life Insurance was understood and embraced by the husband and father. A large amount has been paid by Life Insurance Companies to widows and orphans, when it formed almost their ONLY resource.—*Benjamin Franklin.*

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